



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE

Cindy Hyde-Smith,
Commissioner

2012 Annual
Report

Mississippi Department of
Agriculture and Commerce
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Letter from your Commissioner



Cindy Hyde-Smith, Commissioner

I am proud to present you with the 2012 Annual Report of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC). Our mission is to promote Mississippi's \$7.5 billion agricultural industry while regulating laws governing the various agricultural sectors from on-farm production to processing and retail markets. MDAC is committed to making sure that the state's farmers and ranchers can continue to provide safe food and fiber while maintaining the utmost in consumer confidence in the marketplace.

The services MDAC provides touches the lives of every Mississippian, not just those directly involved in agricultural endeavors. From ensuring that the food that you eat is safe for consumption to assuring that the fuel that you purchase is safe for your vehicle, MDAC strives to ensure

fairness and equity in the marketplace to protect all Mississippians.

The accomplishments highlighted in this report are a testament to the Department's hardworking and dedicated staff that strives to operate efficiently and effectively while utilizing taxpayer funds wisely. Collaborations and joint efforts with other State and Federal agencies and the Mississippi Legislature are integral to MDAC's success.

The Bureau of Regulatory Services and the Bureau of Plant Industry are responsible for the many regulatory functions of the Department which extend from the farm to the marketplace. Regulatory Service Inspectors conduct sanitation inspections on grocery stores and meat plants to ensure that food safety regulations are adhered to. They are also responsible for the certification of gas pumps and verification of weights and measures. The Bureau of Plant Industry protects the agricultural and horticultural interests of the state from harmful insects, diseases, and weeds. The Bureau is also responsible for registering pesticides, feeds, seeds, fertilizers, soil amendments sold in the state, as well as, permitting all pest control operators throughout the state.

The Market Development Division is responsible for promoting Mississippi's agricultural products and agriculturally-related businesses at home and abroad through programs such as the Certified Farmers Market Program, the newly developed Agritourism Registration Program, Farm-to-School, Make Mine Mississippi, and the Mississippi Market Bulletin. The Market Development Division strives to enhance consumer awareness of the quality products that Mississippi has to offer.

MDAC also assists agricultural producers who have been the target of agricultural theft through the Mississippi Agricultural Theft Bureau. The Bureau is charged to investigate any theft that involves agribusiness that may include timber theft, equipment theft, chemical theft, and livestock theft.

In addition to overseeing the responsibilities of the Agency, duties of the Commissioner of Agriculture include leadership through service on the following state boards:

- Mississippi Board of Animal Health
- Mississippi Central Farmers Market Board
- Mississippi Fair Commission
- Mississippi Land, Water, and Timber Resources Board
- Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Permit Board
- Mississippi Egg Marketing Board
- State Seed Board
- State Soil & Water Conservation Committee

This report details the many accomplishments of MDAC this year in each of the various Divisions and Bureaus. I encourage you to learn more about the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce through our website www.mdac.ms.gov.

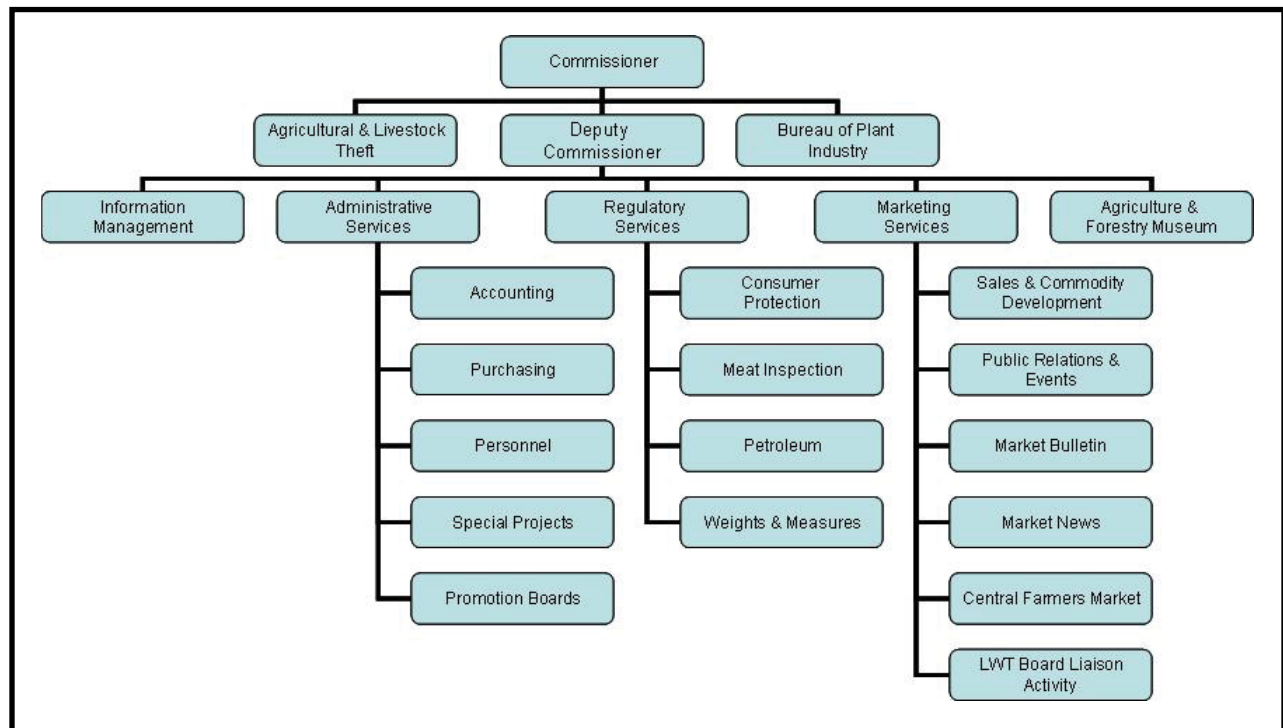
Sincerely,
Cindy Hyde-Smith
Commissioner

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Administration

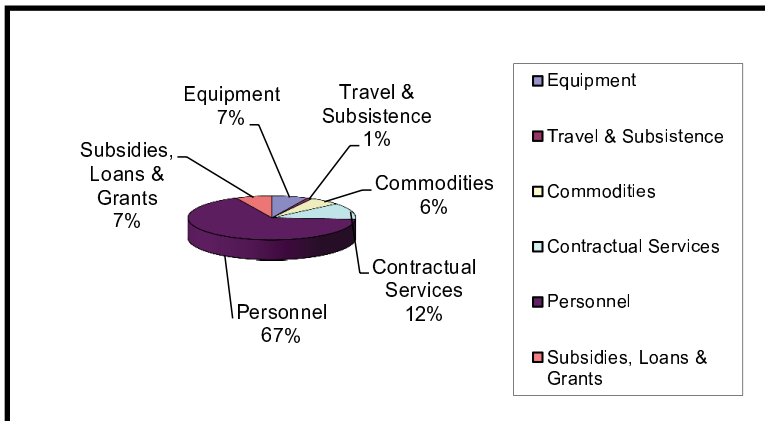
Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce Organization Chart



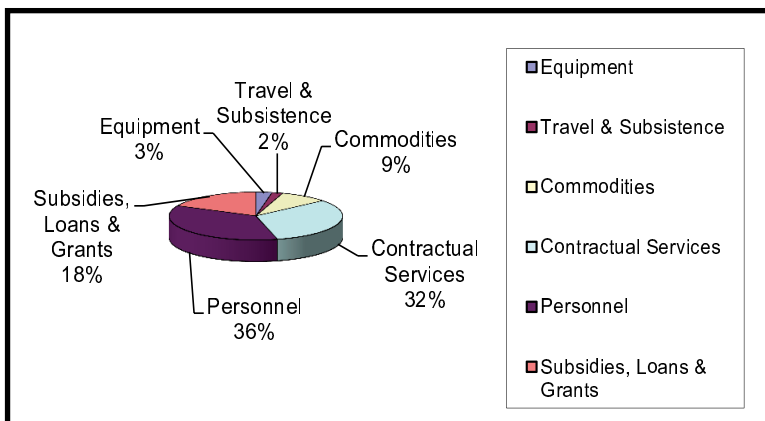
Administration

Cindy Hyde-Smith - Commissioner
Andy Prosser - Deputy Commissioner
John Campbell - BPI Director

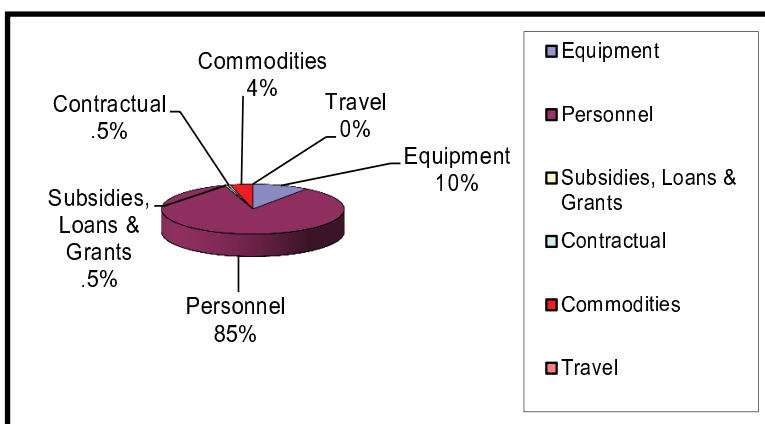
Revenues and Expenditures



MDAC Support Budget General and Special Funds FY 2012	
Total Revenues	\$15,234,132
Total Expenditures	\$14,057,749



Special Funds Only	
Total Revenues	\$6,399,495
Total Expenditures	\$5,223,112



General Fund Only	
Total Revenues	\$8,834,637
Total Expenditures	\$8,834,637

Regulatory Services



The Bureau of Regulatory Services is a regulatory bureau within the Department that is divided into area-specific divisions, which regulates businesses in the State. The Legislature established a "Regulatory Office" within the Department pursuant to Mississippi Code Ann. 69-1-203. The goal of the Bureau of Regulatory Services is to ensure that businesses maintain their activities within a certain framework of laws and regulations with the purpose of protecting the public health and welfare and establishing equity in the marketplace.

The Bureau of Regulatory Services administers state laws and promulgates regulations to support those laws in the areas of Meat Inspection, Retail Food Sanitation, Labeling laws, Peanuts, Petroleum, and Weights and Measures. The Bureau partners with federal and other state agencies.

Core Divisions

- Consumer Protection
- Peanuts and Federal / State Inspection Service (fruits and vegetables)
- Petroleum
- Meat Inspection
- Weights and Measures
- State Metrology Lab

Julie McLemore, Director
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Regulatory Services - Consumer Protection Division

The main mission of the Consumer Protection Division is to ensure food quality and safety at the retail level, as well as fairness and equity in the marketplace through the administration and enforcement of certain laws and regulations designed primarily to protect the interest of the general public.

In FY 2012, the division continued improvement in efficiency. The division handled 87 food sanitation complaints and referred other food-related complaints that did not come under the division's purview to the proper department or agency, which would include U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Drug Administration, or the State Department of Health. Stepped-up enforcement of the Catfish Marketing Law by the division became necessary in the Spring of 2011, when several complaints were received indicating a few restaurants were serving foreign fish under the guise of USA Farm Raised Catfish. The latter part of the fiscal year, more than 400 restaurant inspections took place, with 50 (12.5%) found to be in violation by mislabeling their offerings to the public. In the first part of FY 2012, the restaurant inspections continued with

an overall total of 943 inspections conducted. Of these inspections, 72 food service establishments were found to be in violation or 7.64%. All violations by the restaurants were corrected within the allotted period of time and it appeared that no restaurants were attempting to circumvent the law.

In FY 2012, the division conducted 36 U.S.D.A. Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) reviews in retail food establishments, as assigned by U.S.D.A under a cooperative agreement. This generated \$21,600 in revenues for the division.

The Consumer Protection Division is one of the most diversified divisions in the Department of Agriculture and Commerce. In addition to certain retail food sanitation responsibilities, this division also has weights and measures responsibilities as well as administering six other laws. The division also conducts meat compliance inspections in retail food establishments under a U.S.D.A. Cooperative Agreement; performs U.S.D.A. Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) in designated retail food establishments, under

a U.S.D.A. Cooperative Agreement. There are two memorandums of understanding with the Mississippi Department of Health concerning agency responsibilities in retail food sanitation and the processing and the sale of pure syrup or honey and honey products. In addition, the division has a natural disaster partnership with the US Food and Drug Administration to coordinate with their agency and other state agencies in the event of a natural disaster.

Consumer Protection Statistics

• Retail food sanitation inspections (2.67 % failed)	6,612
• Pre-packaged items weighed (5.99 % placed off-sale)	36,452
• Cases of shell eggs inspected	35,328
• Scales tested (100 pounds or less) (2.14 % rejected)	5,977
• Labeling Inspections	5,052
• Meat compliance inspections	5,917

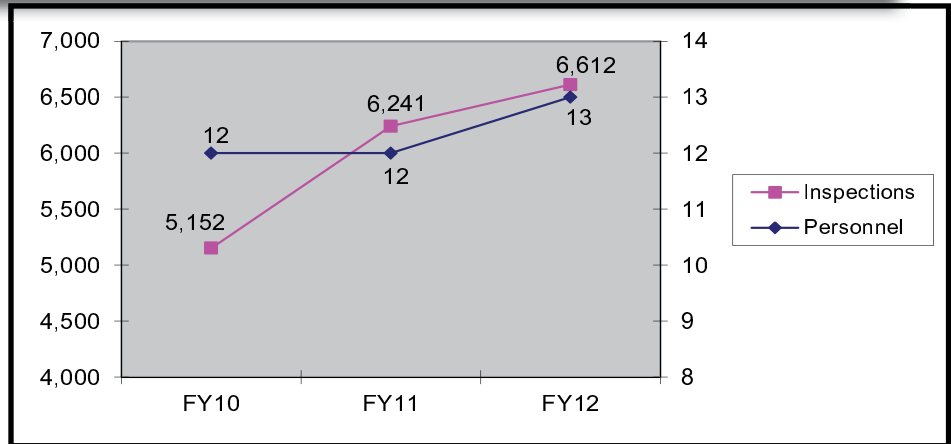
Consumer Protection, continued on next page

Consumer Protection, continued from page 5

- Inspections for commercial garbage disposal compliance 6,612
- Universal Product Code price verification 385 inspections (13.25% failed)

The Consumer Protection Division has continued to increase efficiency in the field and office through the use of laptop computers and a specialized computer software inspection program. The first six months of FY 2012 concluded the fourth year of our division's "New Direction in Food Sanitation Program". This program has proven to be very successful in reducing the number of sanitation violations in the stores and making the general public more aware of the condition of the stores in which they shop. This program has not changed the method of conducting a sanitation inspection but was designed and implemented to better make consumers more aware of the sanitation conditions of the retail food establishments in which they shop through the use of a color coded placard system. The division will strive to continue a co-operative working relationship with other state and federal agencies, as well as other Bureaus and Divisions of the department, to better serve and protect the general public.

John Tillson, Director
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Number of Retail Food Sanitation Inspections FY 2010 through FY 2012



Peanuts and Federal/State Inspection Service

The Federal/State Inspection Division provides Fruit and Vegetable inspections, as well as, Third Party Food Safety Audits known as GAP/GHP audits (Good Agriculture Practices/Good Handling Practices). All inspections and food safety audits are provided statewide to farms, packers, and wholesalers. Farmer Stock Peanut Inspections have increased dramatically from its beginning in 2006. In 2006, there was only one peanut buying point that graded 2,500 tons and employed two contract employees. During FY 2012, there was one peanut buying point that graded a total of 15,000 tons and employed six contract employees. The department utilized three of its state employees to train and supervise the contract employees at each buying point. During FY 2012, 45 GAP/GHP audits were performed.



Organic Cost Share Program

In FY 2012, five organic operations received assistance through the USDA National Organic Program Cost-Share-Program administrated by MDAC which was funded by a USDA grant. Mississippi has become one of the largest shippers of organic blueberries in the nation.

Kevin Riggan, Director
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Regulatory Services - Petroleum Division

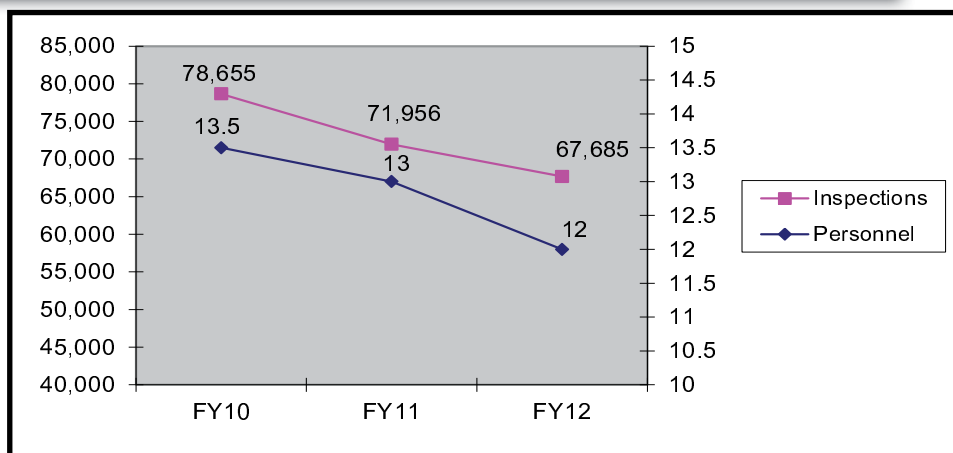
The Petroleum Products Inspection Division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce ensures the quality of fuel purchased within the state. All retail motor fuel products including gasoline, ethanol blended fuel, diesel fuel, biodiesel blended fuel, and kerosene are analyzed by the Mississippi State Chemical Lab to ensure product compliance within American Society for Testing and Materials specifications, including octane, flash point, alcohol content, presence of water, and biodiesel content.

The purchase of a Scully water detector for each inspector has proven to be both a cost savings measure and an extremely accurate method of checking for water in underground storage tanks. This water detector allows inspectors to immediately identify the presence of water in underground storage tanks, which has become increasingly difficult to detect with ethanol blended fuels. At the first hint of water, the detector will sound an alarm, giving the inspector the opportunity to place the product off-sale.

State-of-the-art slide-in calibration units are provided for all field personnel, allowing them a safer and more efficient manner in which to verify calibration of retail motor fuel dispensing devices through random retail device inspections.



The Petroleum Division responded to nearly 175 consumer complaints, which are normally addressed within a 24-hour period. In addition, the Division conducted routine device meter and fuel quality inspections. Water and sign inspections are also performed on site during each inspection to compliance. Total inspections of 2,926 retail locations involving nearly 68,000 individual pump meters were handled for FY 2012. A total of 2,075 violations were issued for non-compliant devices. High-volume meters, typical of bulk racks, are approved using the petroleum division's 150-gallon Calibration Trailer, and truck



Pump Inspections and Personnel for FY 2010 through FY 2012

stop meters are approved using the division's 60-gallon Calibration Trailers.

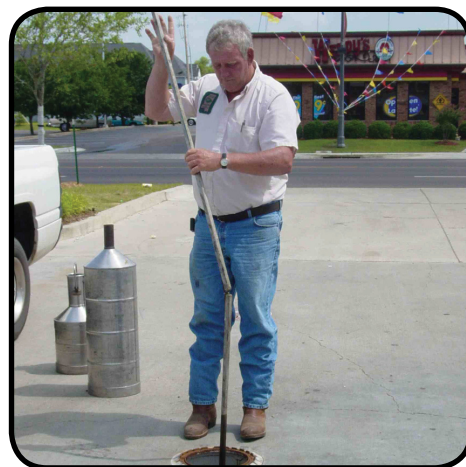
Several administrative complaints were issued for non-compliant product and civil penalties were assessed and collected in the amount of \$28,250.00 which is deposited into the general fund.

Continued use of the WinWam Computer software designed specifically for Weights & Measures officials allows field personnel to work more independently and to complete all inspection information for immediate downloads to the main office computer. The data cards provide full access to email and provide the inspectors with the ability to email pictures of problem situations instantaneously. Laptop mounts in all vehicles have proven a safe means to transport and to use laptops for data entry while on site.

Petroleum Division Responsibilities

• Stations registered	2,926
• Petroleum pumps tested	67,685
• Petroleum products samples	5,176
• Violations issued	3,111
• Stop sales for fuel violations	166
• Sales for calibration violations	149
• Stop sales for sign violations	67
• Stop sales for water violations	158
• Total nozzles	51,522

Jennifer Thompson, Director
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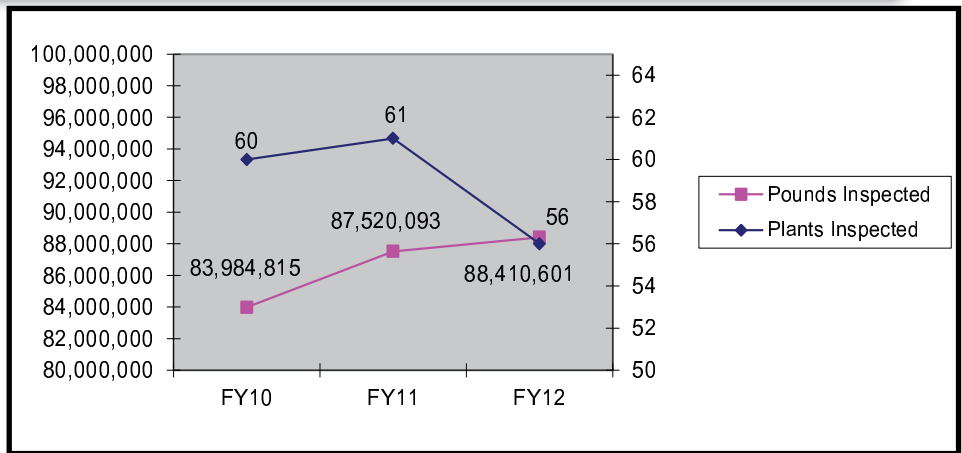


Regulatory Services - Meat Inspection Division

The Meat Inspection Division provides food safety assurance to meat and poultry food consumers. This is done by providing inspection services to establishments that prepare meat and poultry food products for entry into intrastate commerce and to some establishments that engage in interstate commerce. This assurance is becoming more critical as more food products are intended to be consumed with little or no further preparation at home.

The division began with the Meat, Meat-Food and Poultry Regulation and Inspection Law of 1960. The law was amended with the Mississippi Meat Inspection Law of 1968 at which time it entered into a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The purpose of the cooperative agreement is to establish a meat and poultry inspection system that is "equal to" the federal inspection system. Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce also has cooperative agreements for the Talmadge-Aiken Program and the Compliance and Investigation Division program.

The Meat Inspection Division is moving from organoleptic inspection to more and newly-evolving scientific methods of assessing the effectiveness of food safety systems. This division is constantly implementing new scientific advancements in food safety. Each establishment that produces meat products now have interventions in place to eliminate or control the pathogens that are most likely to cause food borne illness. The Meat Inspection Division is in the process of transitioning to a new computerized inspection system. The current system, Performance Based Inspection System (PBIS), was designed to meet food safety needs nationwide in a central system. The new inspection system (Public Health Information System) will not only accomplish the original goal of PBIS but will also



Pounds of Meat and Plants Inspected for FY 2010 through FY 2012

integrate data from all program systems and program areas for use as a tool in making the most informed decisions about food safety.

Meat Inspection Division Statistics

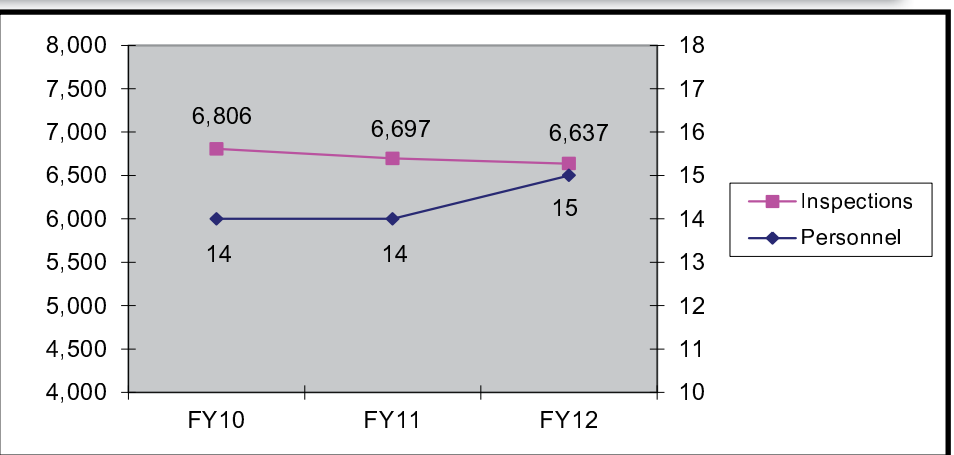
- Pounds of red meat inspected 48,682,321
- Pounds of poultry inspected 39,728,280
- Number of animals inspected 210,663
- Number of quail inspected 108,998
- Number of rabbits inspected 32,050
- Number of state meat plants licenses issued 34
- Number T/A plant (no state license required) 22



Richard Benton, Director
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Regulatory Services - Weights and Measures Division

The Weights and Measures Division serves a valuable consumer and commercial protection function for the people of the State of Mississippi. The division regulates the use of weighing and measuring devices used commercially within the state to ensure compliance with the Weights and Measures Law of 1964. The weights and measures inspectors and officials ensure equity in the marketplace by making routine inspections on those devices. The inspectors test all types of commercial weighing devices, from the largest, such as railroad scales, vehicle scales, and livestock scales, to the smallest, such as those used to weigh precious metals and stones. This division promotes marketplace equity by checking and verifying package weight. Also, all businesses that use Universal Product Code scanning systems are subject to price verification. The division also investigates complaints involving weighing and measuring devices and their use.



Inspections and Personnel for FY 2010 through FY 2012

Weights & Measures, continued on next page

Weights and Measures, *continued from page 8*



Scale being tested by precision weights used in sales transactions of precious metals such as gold.

In addition, the department licenses scale repairmen and the companies that sell, install, and repair weighing or measuring devices within the State of Mississippi.

Moisture Meter Testing Laboratory

The Mississippi Moisture Meter Laboratory is also a part of the Weights and Measures Division and is located on the campus of the Delta Research and Extension Center in Stoneville, Mississippi. The lab provides testing and inspection of devices used to measure the moisture content of agricultural products offered for sale, processed or stored, using standard methods set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Moisture Meter Lab also compiles grain standards used in the inspection of grain moisture meters tested in the

State of Mississippi.

Weights and Measures Division Overview

- Tested 1,254 heavy scales and rejected 229
- Tested 4,073 intermediate scales and rejected 351
- Tested 153 livestock scales and rejected 20
- Tested 85 rail scales and rejected 13
- Calibrated 1 dairy farm milk tanks
- Bonded 92 Weighmaster inspections and rejected 20
- Conducted 224 pulpwood/timber inspections and rejected 59
- Checked 3,371 packages and rejected 13
- Handled 166 UPC inspections and rejected 27
- Tested 624 gram scales and rejected 212
- Tested 182 grain moisture meters and rejected 3
- Oven tested 9 soybean, 101 corn, 104 wheat and 31 rice samples

Connie Braswell, Director

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Regulatory Services - State Metrology Lab

The Regulatory Division maintains the State Metrology Laboratory located on the campus of Alcorn State University in Lorman, Mississippi. The lab is accredited by the National Institute of Standard and Technology (NIST) which certifies weighing and measuring test equipment to validate the accuracy of these standards. The certification allows the lab to provide certification and calibration services for government, commercial, and private entities. Once certified, the equipment then can be used for testing and calibrating of mass and volume standards. This certification allows the Department to test all measuring devices for accuracy used in commerce which is traceable to NIST.



**State Metrology Laboratory
Lorman, MS.**

The Metrology Laboratory Overview

- Total calibrations were 4,969.
- Collected \$55,580.63 in calibrations fees.

Mel Isagii, Director

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Bureau of Plant Industry



Bureau of Plant Industry is located in Starkville, Mississippi

The Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) is a regulatory and service division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. BPI serves as the Plant Protection and Quarantine Division for the state of Mississippi. It carries out regulatory programs pertaining to agricultural aviation, pesticides, plant pests, honey bees, seed, animal feed, fertilizer, lime, and soil/plant amendments. Additionally, it maintains cooperative agreements with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in administration and enforcement of state and federal laws.

Purpose

The State Plant Board was established under the Mississippi Plant Act of 1918, Sections 69-25-1 through 69-25-47, Mississippi Code 1972, to protect the agricultural and horticultural interests of the state from the introduction and spread of destructive plant pests. In 1971, the Mississippi Legislature abolished the board and established the Division of Plant Industry within the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce to assume the board's duties and responsibilities. In 1991, the name of the Division of Plant Industry was changed to the Bureau of Plant Industry. In 1996, the state agriculture department's Seed Division and Feed, Fertilizer, Lime, and Soil/Plant Amendments Division were placed under the administration of the Bureau.

Legislative Authority

The Bureau is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the following state statutes:

- Mississippi Plant Act of 1918, Sections 69-25-1 through 69-25-47
- Mississippi Bee Disease Act of 1920, Sections 69-25-101 through 69-25-109
- Regulation of Professional Services Law of 1938, Sections 69-19-1 through 69-19-15
- Agricultural Aviation Licensing Law of 2009,

Sections 69-21-101 through 69-21-128

- Mississippi Pure Seed Law of 1968, Sections 69-3-1 through 69-3-29
- Mississippi Commercial Feed Law of 1972, Sections 75-45-151 through 75-45-195
- Mississippi Fertilizer Law of 1972, Sections 75-47-1 through 75-47-39
- Mississippi Pesticide Law of 1975, Sections 69-23-1 through 69-23-29
- Mississippi Pesticide Application Act of 1975, Sections 69-23-101 through 69-23-135
- Mississippi Soil and Plant Amendment Law of 1978, Sections 69-24-1 through 69-24-27
- Mississippi Boll Weevil Management Act of 1993, Sections 69-37-1 through 69-37-41
- Mississippi Agricultural Liming Materials Act of 1993, Sections 69-39-1 through 69-39-19

The Bureau is also designated by the federal government as the state agency responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act.

Plant Pest Program

- Conducted 643 nursery inspections and 903 nursery dealer inspections.
- Conducted 24 inspections for Brown Garden Snail on plant materials shipped from California.
- Certified and inspected 25,337 colonies of honey bees.
- Permitted 53,273 bee colonies into Mississippi.
- Issued 431 phytosanitary certificates on plant material and seed export.
- Found no Sweet Potato Weevils after setting 3,093 traps on 22,800 acres of sweet potatoes.
- Conducted Cogongrass demonstration program for 319 private land owners. 1,531.25

acres were treated in the program.

- Collected assessment fees on 465,429 acres of cotton by farmers participating in statewide eradication of the Boll Weevil.
- Issued 32 landscape horticulturist licenses.
- Issued 17 tree surgery licenses.
- Conducted 1,399 surveys statewide at nurseries and nursery dealers for Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Chrysanthemum White Rust, Viburnum Leaf Beetle, Emerald Ash Borer, Giant African Snail, Cactus Moth, and Asian Longhorned Beetle. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 318 surveys in 51 counties at soybean production fields for Maritime Garden Snail, Soybean Pod Borer, Chilli Thrips, Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Yellow Witchweed, and Benghal Dayflower. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 365 surveys in 12 counties at cotton production fields for Giant African Snail, Cotton Seed Bug, Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Egyptian Broomrape, and Benghal Dayflower. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 37 surveys in 6 counties at rice production fields for Bacterial Leaf Streak of Rice. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 410 surveys statewide in pastures and livestock facilities for the noxious weed, Tropical Soda Apple. No positive sites were found.
- Conducted 1,809 surveys statewide in nurseries, nursery dealers, and the environment for the noxious weed, Giant Salvinia. No new positive sites were found.
- Conducted 1,809 surveys statewide in nurseries and croplands for the noxious weed, Benghal Dayflower. No new positive sites were found.
- Conducted 1,479 surveys statewide in nurseries, nursery dealers, and the environment for the noxious weed, Cogongrass. 66 counties were found to be positive.
- Placed 6 traps in 6 counties at lumber mills and furniture manufactures for the Sirex Woodwasp. All traps were found to be negative.
- Placed 330 traps in 41 counties on ash trees for the Emerald Ash Borer. All traps were found to be negative.

• Placed 28 traps in 4 counties at high risk sites for Japanese Pine Sawyer Beetle, Redhaired Pine Bark Beetle, Pine Shoot Beetle, and 2 Ambrosia Beetles. All traps were found to be negative.

• Placed 72 traps in 11 counties at high risk sites for Africanized Honey Bee. All traps were found to be negative.

Pesticide Program

- Registered 12,128 pesticide products.

BPI, continued on next page

Bureau of Plant Industry , continued from page 5



BPI inspector conducting a routine inspection.

- Collected 463 samples from products available at retail and distribution outlets to check compliance with state and federal pesticide laws.
- Issued 5 stop-sale orders on pesticide products found to be deficient, misbranded, or not registered.
- Issued 60 special-use registrations (Section 24c of FIFRA) on pesticide products.
- Issued 9 emergency exemptions (Section 18 of FIFRA) on pesticide products.
- Licensed 300 dealers to sell restricted-use pesticide products.
- Issued 562 licenses, 41 permits, and 731 registered technician identification cards to persons engaged in professional services. Ex: Pest control and weed control.
- Issued 2,435 private applicator certificates.
- Issued 458 commercial applicator certificates.
- Made 150 inspections of records kept by private applicators of restricted-use pesticide.
- Conducted 58 producer-establishment inspections, 208 marketplace inspections, 258 inspections of applicator records, 103 inspections of dealer records, and 20 container containment inspections.
- Conducted 59 inspections of pesticide misuse and 83 inspections in agricultural situations.
- Conducted 32 inspections of pesticide misuse and 1039 inspections in nonagricultural situations.
- Collected 191 samples under the Pesticide Enforcement Program.
- Conducted 37 worker protection inspections.
- Licensed 234 agricultural aviation pilots, 101 applicators and registered 191 aircraft for agricultural purposes.

- Collected 43,662 pounds of waste pesticide.
- Issued 215 pest management consultants licenses.
- Issued 8 soil classifier licenses.

Seed Program and State Seed Testing Laboratory

- Conducted 224 seed inspections.
- Collected 2,570 official regulatory seed samples.
- Found 159 official regulatory seed samples to be in violation of the State Seed Law.
- Issued 1,412 permits for the sale of seed to be planted.
- Tested 19,812 seed samples.
- Conducted 7,781 special tests on seed such as cool germ test, accelerated aging on soybeans, and red rice test.
- Performed a total of 39,338 tests on seed.

Feed, Fertilizer, Lime, and Soil-Plant Amendments Program

- Registered 690 feed manufacturers.
- Collected 3,031 feed samples.
- Registered 3,930 fertilizer products from 415 fertilizer companies.
- Registered 95 lime products from 65 distributors.
- Collected 832 fertilizer samples.

- Collected 155 lime samples.

Public Information Program

- Produced the September 2011, December 2011, March 2012, and June 2012 issues of the quarterly newsletter, Plant Industry News.
- Issued the following press releases: MDAC Reminds Homeowners of the Importance of Hiring Licensed Pest Control Operators, Emergency Exemption for Corn Seed Treatment Announced, Hyde-Smith Secures Helpful Product for Mississippi Beekeepers, MDAC Launches New Online System for Registering Pesticides, and New Insecticide Approved for Mississippi Cotton Farmers.
- Conducted pesticide and chemical safety training sessions at the 2011 Leake County Safety Expo and the 2011 Safety Town in Oktibeha County.
- Provided exhibit and educational materials at the 2011 Fall Flower and Garden Fest in Crystal Springs, 2011 Magnolia Beef and Poultry Expo in Raleigh, 2012 Mississippi Agricultural Aviation Association Convention in Biloxi, and the 2012 Everything Garden Expo in Starkville.

John Campbell, Bureau Director
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Marketing



Agriculture is Mississippi's number one industry, employing approximately 29% of the state's workforce either directly or indirectly. In Mississippi, agriculture is a \$7.5 billion industry. There are approximately 42,400 farms in the state covering 11.2 million acres, which makes agriculture a significant contributor to all 82 counties. The Market Development Division is dedicated to promoting and heightening the public's awareness of Mississippi's agriculture commodities and the farmers and ranchers who produce them.

Market Development Highlights

- Presented agriculture's message to schools and civic organizations across the state.
- Participated in conferences and festivals throughout Mississippi.
- Distributed thousands of recipes using products grown in Mississippi.
- Marketed the *Mississippi Farmers Market Cookbook* with recipes submitted from Mississippians statewide.
- Counseled companies, producers, and organizations.
- Worked with the Mississippi Farmers Market to promote agriculture and healthy eating through cooking demonstrations and other events.
- Administered the Mississippi Certified Farmers Market Program, which is an ongoing marketing initiative for farmers markets across the state. There are currently 26 certified markets across the state.
- Assisted certified farmers markets with advertising costs through this marketing initiative.
- Assisted in marketing of the Mississippi Farmers Market Nutrition Program.
- The 2012 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program awarded Mississippi \$282,041.69 to distribute to organizations that will enhance our state's specialty crop industry. Eleven projects were awarded to universities and producer organizations to administer research and programs in areas specifically related to high tunnels, sweet potatoes, food safety, certifications of Farmers Markets, and GAP/GHP.

- Worked with Alcorn State University on Federal State Marketing Improvement Program grants.
- Continued to support the Catfish Country of Origin Law in restaurants, which went into effect July 1, 2008.
- Conducted educational workshops for growers and agriculture industry across the state.
- Collaborated with Mississippi State University to assist in conducting 11 additional workshops with 288 participants focusing on food safety at farmers markets. These classes consisted of general food safety and acidified canned foods.
- Member of the Southern United States Trade Association, encompassing 15 southern states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Its mission is to increase exports for United States agriculture and high-value foods.
- Department conducted tours and gave presentations to more than 100 international visitors.
- Counseled individuals and associations on export opportunities.
- Assisted in the passage of the Mississippi Agritourism limited liability law. Established guidelines and registration process for agritourism operators, and administers this ongoing and annual program. There are 25 registered agribusiness operations in the state.
- Information to statewide media on all important agricultural events.
- An agricultural commodity directory distributed statewide and located on the web at www.mdac.ms.gov
- A directory of the 74 Mississippi farmers markets.

Public Information

Since 1928, the farming community throughout Mississippi has had access to one of the most important farming tools, the *Mississippi Market Bulletin*. The *Mississippi Market Bulletin* is a buy/sell newspaper for farmers to advertise their agricultural items that have been raised, grown, produced, or operated on their farms. It is the best source for information regarding machinery/equipment, livestock, plants/seeds, agricultural real-estate, or anything related to Mississippi

agriculture. It provides a wealth of information delivered to farmers' doors 24 times a year. The *Mississippi Market Bulletin* is a semi-monthly publication, published on the 1st and 15th of each month. Its circulation of 46,300 includes in-state and out-of-state subscribers.

Trade Shows, Conferences, and Fairs

- Mississippi State Fair.
- Dixie National Rodeo & Livestock Show and Parade.
- National Association of State Departments of Agriculture.
- Southern Association of State Departments of Agriculture.

Make Mine Mississippi Program

This unique marketing program was created to highlight products at least 51% produced, manufactured, or enhanced in Mississippi. Using a logo to identify these Mississippi value-added products, the program has heightened consumer awareness about the quality and availability of Mississippi products.

Legislation providing the foundation for Make Mine Mississippi was passed in April 1999. At the end of FY 2012, 1066 companies across the state in 30 categories belonged to the program. Funding secured for the Cooperative Promotions Reimbursement Program in November 1999 has been a major benefit to members. Using this program, members have increased sales and helped their businesses grow, contributing to the economy of our state.

- From the inception of the cooperative promotions fund in 1999 to the end of FY 2012, 740 companies were allocated funding.
- More than \$650,000 has been awarded.
- The companies reported more than \$90,000,000 in sales as a result of the promotional activities paid for in part by this program.
- Businesses are currently reporting roughly 3,900 new jobs created as a result of the Make Mine Mississippi program.
- Make Mine Mississippi is meant to unify the promotion of all Mississippi products, promote a positive image of the state, and sell Mississippi products.

Livestock Market News Service

The Livestock and Grain Market News program is a Federal/State cooperative agreement in conjunction with U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Marketing, continued on next page

Marketing, continued from page 11

A livestock and grain reporter supervises the dissemination of livestock report collecting and disseminating grain price information and radio and television broadcasts.

This office provides price information on livestock and grain to lending institutions, university agricultural economists, consultants, and livestock associations. A livestock report is issued in the *Mississippi Market Bulletin*, which has 46,300 readers per year.

Thirteen livestock auction markets are reported by eight cross-trained Mississippi Board of Animal Health personnel. Prices collected from the twelve sales represent 85% of all the livestock markets throughout the state.

Fruits and Vegetables

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce has a Fruits and Vegetables Division. This division's purpose is to assist our growers with planting, marketing, or any problems encountered by the growers.

A revolving fund is utilized to give our growers fast pay when they sell their products. After

MDAC receives the Bill of Lading confirming the buyer's acceptance of the shipment, a Mississippi grower is paid from this fund within five days. The buyer then pays MDAC instead of paying the grower. Each grower and buyer must sign an acknowledgement with MDAC stating their understanding of the terms and regulations of MDAC's Revolving Fund.

Since 2002, MDAC has been participating in the Farm to School Program. This program is run by the Department of Defense, which for years bought produce from local growers for military bases. The DOD expanded the Farm to School Program to include the school systems. MDAC works very closely with the Mississippi Public School Nutritional Purchasing Agent, who receives all orders from the state's schools for produce needed for school cafeterias. MDAC then finds growers to supply the school system with the required fruits and vegetables. In FY2012, more than \$203,700 of Mississippi produce was sold to local schools. Our growers now have an additional market, and school children are being introduced to locally-grown fruits and vegetables.

Agritourism

Agritourism is a fast-growing part of the future

of Mississippi's agriculture. With the public's desire for a "farm experience" and for the fun of fairs and festivals, the Department of Agriculture and Commerce is committed to promoting agritourism in our state. The Department has worked collaboratively with the Mississippi Agritourism Association, the Mississippi State University Extension Service, the Mississippi Development Authority, and the Mississippi Department of Transportation to assist and promote the agritourism industry. Joint efforts have resulted in a new Agritourism Registration Program that provides limited liability to persons engaged in agritourism activities and a new Signage Program which allows qualified agritourism businesses to have directional signage on the right-of-way of state maintained highways.

Paige Manning, Director
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Mississippi Farmers Market



MISSISSIPPI FARMERS MARKET

The Mississippi Farmers Market was created by an Act of Legislature, House Bill 54 Laws of 1946. The Market was created to provide facilities for the efficient handling of farm products in the interest of the farmer, consumer, general public, and the State of Mississippi.

In February 2006, the Farmers Market moved to the new 18,000 square foot market facility located at the corner of Jefferson and High Street.

The Market rents space to seasonal fruit and vegetable farmers, specialty food vendors, and artisans from across the state and provides a place where consumers can buy products directly from the growers or producers. The Market also rents the facility for private parties and events.

On average, the Market serves more than 100 businesses across the state. The Mississippi Farmers Market has an average of nearly 2,000 customers each week shopping during the peak months of the summer vegetable season.



**Farmers Market located off High Street
in Downtown Jackson.**

The Farmers Market Grill, rents space from the Market and serves breakfast and lunch six days per week.

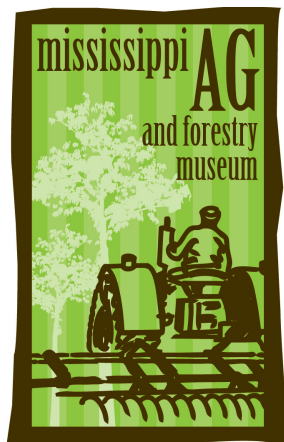
The Mississippi Farmers Market operates from a "Special Fund Account." Income is derived from:

- Booth/Stall rentals
- Restaurant facility rental
- General facility rental

Frank Malta, Director
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www.msfarmersmarket.com

Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum



The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum boasts 139,000 visitors annually from all 50 states and 32 countries.

The Museum continues to host educational events throughout the year. With the help of organizations such as the MS Egg Marketing Board, the MS Beef Council, MS Farm Bureau and the MSU Extension Service, the Museum educates the public about the importance of agriculture and the state's commodities.

Event Highlights

- The Easter Egg Hunt attracted 1,100 visitors who enjoyed complimentary hot dogs and drinks, egg dyeing, games and the egg hunt.
- Summer Kids' Camp focused on the Life of a Farmer including activities such as touring the working farmstead and experiencing demonstrations of the print shop, blacksmith shop, and doctors office.
- The Museum hosted a Back to School Night for Teachers, in cooperation with the MS Children's Museum, the MS Museum of Natural Science and the MS Sports Hall of Fame and Museum.
- More than 4,600 children and adults attended the October Pumpkin Adventure which included a hay ride tour of gardens and Small Town Mississippi, a snack, a walk around the museum and a pumpkin to take home.
- Harvest Festival was visited by more than 5,200 people, including 3,600 children. This educational event consisted of saw mill, cane mill, print shop, blacksmith shop and grist mill. The Bisland Cotton Gin, the oldest cotton gin still in operation, ginned 10 bales for visitors. The event also featured hit-and-miss engines, bluegrass music, antique tractors, and vehicles from the Antique Vehicle Club of Mississippi.
- More than 2,000 visitors attended the Museum's Country Christmas, which included Small Town MS in lights, a breakfast sampler, the reading of "Twas the Night Before Christmas" and the Gingerbread Gift Market.



Annual Pumpkin Adventure held in October.

• Assisted in National Ag Day at the MS Farmers Market on March 8, 2012. The Museum helped by recruiting schools to be a part of the celebration. These 4th graders were able to visit with the local farmers selling their goods, plant a seed to take home, and learn about beef cattle. They were also treated to hamburger and sweet potato fries for lunch.

stressing the importance of introducing agriculture-related activities to their students.

Charlie Dixon, Director

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New Projects in 2012

The Jackson Convention and Visitors Bureau began an online ticketing program for Jackson attractions. Consumers can now purchase tickets online. The link is available on the museum website.

The Museum continues to work on the following grant projects:

- The Recreational Trails Grant from the Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks has helped the Museum replace the existing nature trail and create new exhibits for livestock. These include repairs and additions to the barnyard and a new trail to connect the forest area to existing museum trails. The purpose of this project is to improve visitors' perception and knowledge about the importance of natural resources to the agriculture industry.
- The Jackson Convention and Visitors Bureau awarded a grant in the amount of \$9,792.50 as a reimbursement for 2012 advertisement expenses.
- The Mississippi Farm Bureau - Women in Agriculture host, "AG in the Classroom" teacher workshops for continuing education credits. The Museum participates in these workshops all over the state, and encourages teachers to bring their students to visit the museum. The Museum presented "Why Teach Agriculture" to 200 teachers,



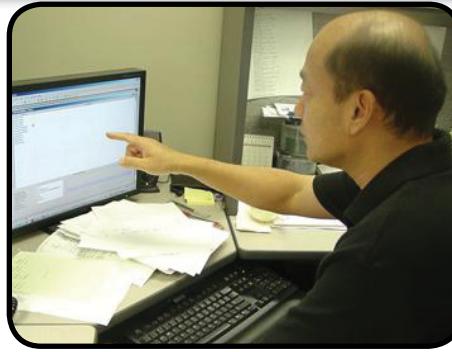
Information Management

The Information Management Division (IMD) is primarily responsible for providing information technology and services to all employees of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC). Also, IMD provides technical and network support, applications development and systems support, and strategic planning services for both the Mississippi Board of Animal Health and the Mississippi State Fair Commission.

IMD plays a critical role in aligning information technology with the agency's business goals, providing the infrastructure resources to support the agency's communication and decision making, and exploring emerging technologies to promote agriculture and commerce in the state.

The Information Management Division successfully accomplished the following major projects during the last fiscal year:

- Replaced 70 aging and out-of-warranty desktop computers and printers with new equipment and office automation software.
- Successfully migrated from a tape backup system to a disk based system increasing reliability,



ity, improving network performance, enhancing data protection, providing offsite backup for Starkville office, and reducing the overall backup processing time.

- Deployed Apple iPads for management staff to communicate and access agency information including calendar appointments, email, and Internet browsing capabilities when traveling and attending meetings outside the office.
- Implemented a campus-wide Wi-Fi network to provide high speed Internet access to guests and patrons of the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum.
- Revamped the Mississippi Agriculture and For-

estry Museum website with easy navigation features, new graphics, and a more efficient search engine. Citizens can plan visits to the Museum, find upcoming events, and browse through rental facilities quickly and easily.

- Upgraded the seed certification software to a virtualized web based system that supports the regulatory needs of the State Seed Testing Laboratory. The system now allows Bureau of Plant Industry to effectively manage seed certification and validation of purity and quality of seed samples. Some of the enhanced features and benefits of the system include web enabled reporting, and time and cost savings along with improved efficiency.

Umesh Sanjanwala, Director

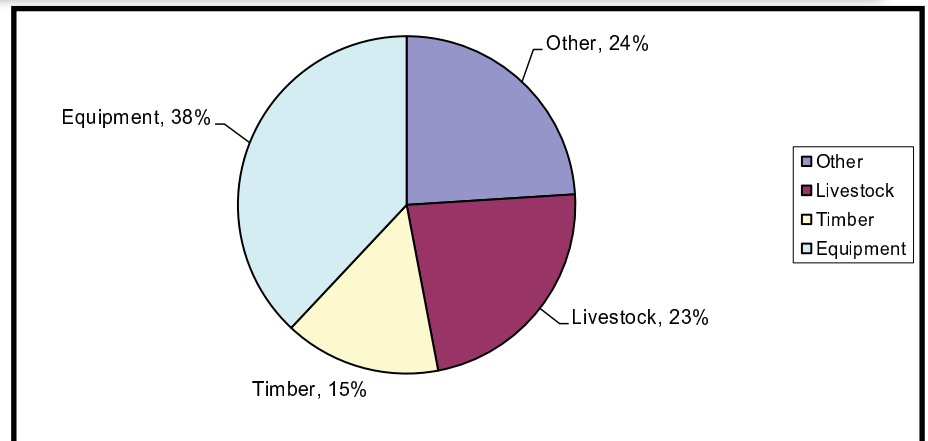
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Agriculture and Livestock Theft



The Agriculture and Livestock Theft Bureau was created in 1993 to assist in the investigation of all farm and agriculture-related crimes. The bureau has a director, secretary/brand registrar, and nine investigators, one for each Mississippi Highway Patrol District. Investigators are charged with enforcing all state laws pertaining to the theft of cattle, horses, swine, poultry, fish, farm equipment, chemicals, timber, and all other farm or agriculture-related crimes. The bureau is also responsible for the investigation and prosecution of all persons who violate any of the laws administered by the Department of Agriculture and Commerce.

In addition to its law enforcement function, the Agriculture and Livestock Theft Bureau maintains registration of all livestock brands. Livestock in Mississippi do not have to be branded; however, if they are branded, the brand must be registered. The brands are recorded for a five-



Percentage Distribution of Dollar Value of Reported Crimes

Total Dollar Value of \$4,087,312 for FY 2012

year period at a cost of five dollars. Registered brands are published in book form and distributed to law enforcement throughout the state. The most current book was printed in December 2012 and has over a 1,000 brands registered.

A new Division Director, was promoted in 2012. The new director has 15 years of law enforcement experience.

In Spring 2013, the Livestock Theft Division plans to implement a new records information system. This will help maintain information for statistical and data purposes.

Jeff Stewart, Director

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